



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

JOINT COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

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August 15, 2006

Ms. Judith Judson, Chair
Department of Telecommunication and Energy
One South Station
Boston, MA 02110

Via Fax 617-345-9103

Dear Chairwoman Judson:

We are writing to express our opposition to the pending petition submitted by Verizon pertaining to changes in the cable television franchising process. We do not support this petition to change the current process because it will establish a two tiered system of cable television licensing which will result in unfair competition. The existing municipal agreements with a cable television franchise already establish a level of predictability and expectation from the new applicants. Based on this information, a new cable television franchise can enter into negotiations and make a sound business decision based on existing information.

The current cable television franchising process has been in place for many years and is essential to make these franchises accountable to the municipalities that they do business in. The Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) opposes Verizon's petition and supports keeping the current licensing requirements. Municipalities have demonstrated that they are willing to encourage more cable television competition because it is in the best interest of their residents. Municipalities have been and are willing to negotiate a fair franchise agreement. Verizon has signed several cable television franchise agreements and are in the process of negotiating several with other municipalities.

We do not believe that changing the current cable television franchising licensing process is in the best interest of the municipality or the consumer. The current system is one that we have all worked under for many years and should not be changed to satisfy a new cable television provider.

Thank you for your time and attention on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Rachel Kaprielian
State Representative

James Timilty
State Senator